

TABLE OF CONTENTS

For the first issue in the 30th Volume of the Omen on February the First in the Year of our Lord 2008.

... Section Hate ...

Stephen Morton **04** *David Newfeld is a Dick*

Also Stephen **05** *Dear Thieves*

... Section Speak ...

Victoria Quine **06** *Relay for Life*

Kristian Brevik **07** *Steak*

Tara Jacob **08** *Hampshire Lingo*

... Section Lies ...

Hannah Allen **09** *Post-Apocalyptic Journal*

Athena Currier **10** *X versus Y*

Jacob Lefton **11** *Uncharted Territory*

David Mansfield **12** *David's Wisdom Nook*

Chris Sommer **13** *The Dangers of Sleeping with Apples:
a Retrospective In On and Around
Insomnia in the Apple Populace of
New Guinea*

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Velarian Frances	Trojan Horse

... Section Fonts ...

Molly McLeod **14** *When Fonts are a
Life or Death Matter*

Also Molly **14** *Interbang: a brief exposé*

Molly Again **15** *Obama has the Best Fonts:
the Presidential Election and
Graphic Design*

White space is nice.

TO SUBMIT:

Submissions are due on alternating Saturdays before 5 P.M. You can submit in rich text or plain text format by CD, Flash Drive, singing telegram, carrier pigeon, paper airplane, Fed-Ex, Pony Express, semaphore, or email. Get your submissions to Lindsay Barbieri, Merrill B103, Box 0542, lkb06@hampshire.edu

"Sex with Emily Dickinson would be
like driving through Kansas."

-Victoria Quine

Front Cover:

Molly McLeod and Corvus Woolf

EDITORIAL: EXERCISE

by Jacob Lefton

Welcome back, ladies and gentlemen! It is spring semester, 2008, which holds special significance for me.

In other news, I'm running a strengthening and conditioning workshop from 9:45ish to 11:45ish Sunday through Thursday night in the South Lounge (2nd floor) of the RCC. We warm up and stretch and do strength exercises isolating muscle groups in large categories like 'arms,' 'legs,' 'core,' and 'back.' We also do a bunch of cardio, and some basic tumbling—forward and backward rolls, handstands, and other stuff. It's a lot of fun, and you don't have to be in great physical condition to come. Just follow along to the best of your ability.

It doesn't take long to notice an improvement once you start working out. We're not going for Charles Atlas type bodies—just becoming more comfortable and confident with our own. It works too. I take gymnastics at a local gym. This past weekend, after two weeks of running the conditioning workshop, I found that I didn't get winded or worn out after an hour of gymnastics. Also, skills that I had been struggling with seem closer than ever before!

What's most exciting about working out is that you tend to start feeling better about yourself. Sleep comes easier at

night, and with a good night's sleep, one can feel really good in the morning. It also encourages you to eat proper meals, so you have enough energy and protein to build and work your muscles—this lifestyle change can improve your mood, which in theory can help improve your relationships, work, and everything else. And it doesn't take much to get this change to happen. Just an hour a day a few times a week for a few weeks, and you're doing better than ever.

Please, come to conditioning!

Finally, there is a Board of Trustees meeting on Friday and Saturday February 8th and 9th. On Thursday the 7th, some subset of the Trustees will be eating dinner in SAGA. If you want to come and chat with them or listen to others, food is on their dime. I strongly recommend it, because rarely do trustees and students actually get to spend time together. Most trustees spend surprisingly little time interacting with the community. For those of you unfamiliar with the term, the trustees are the college's board of directors. They hold the college in fiduciary (\$\$\$) trust, and are also responsible for the overall mission and goals of the college.

POLICY

The Omen is a biweekly publication that is the world's only example of the consistent application of a straightforward policy: we publish all signed submissions from members of the Hampshire community that are not libelous. Send us your impassioned yet poorly-thought-out rants, self-insertion fan fiction, MS Paint comics, and whiny emo poetry: we'll publish it all, and we're happy to do it. The Omen is about giving you a voice, no matter how little you deserve it. Since its founding in December of 1992 by Stephanie Cole, the Omen has hardly ever missed an issue, making it Hampshire's longest-running publication.

Your Omen submission (you're submitting right now, right?) might not be edited,

and we can't promise any spellchecking either, so any horrendous mistakes are your fault, not ours. We do promise not to insert comical spelling mistakes in submissions to make you look foolish. Your submission must include your real name: an open forum comes with a responsibility to take ownership of your views. (Note: Views expressed in the Omen do not necessarily reflect the views of the Omen editor, the Omen staff, or anyone, anywhere, living or dead.)

The Omen staff consists of whoever shows up for Omen layout, which usually takes place on alternate Saturday nights in the basement of Merrill on a computer with an extremely inadequate monitor. You should come. We don't bite. You can find the Omen on other Fridays in SAGA, the post office, or on the door of your mod.

The Omen Haiku

Views in the Omen (5)

Do not necessarily (7)

Reflect the staff's views (5)

David Newfeld is a Dick

by **Stephen Morton** 

David Newfeld is a dick.

Let me explain.

Indiepop is my favorite genre of music. I'm not really going to try to explain the genre here, but if you're unfamiliar with it, Pitchfork (I know, I know) has a good feature on it that you can find by googling "twee as fuck". But key to the history of indiepop is DIY ethic, and a celebration of the small and acts of love. In the past year, several new indiepop labels have sprung up, with names like WeePOP! Records, Lost Music Records, YAY! Records, Atomic Beat Records, and Cloudberry Records. All of these labels specialize in releasing indiepop singles on either 7" vinyl or 3" CDR.

Cloudberry, a CDR label, had been extremely prolific, putting out group of a couple singles at a time, and doing this three times a month. On February 1st, a couple days from the writing of this, they'll be putting out their 76th CDR single, their first vinyl single, and their second fanzine. Their music is all from unsigned bands, largely bands who haven't had any releases.

David Newfeld is best known as the producer of the albums of Broken Social Scene. He's also recently worked as the producer for Los Campesinos! (the exclamation mark is part of the name), a fairly new Welsh Indiepop band which is working in the same collective vein as BSS does.

Skatterbrain is an indiepop blog, and one that I believe is fairly popular in terms of the indiepop online scene. They've been fans of Cloudberry for a while now, and post about them fairly often; which makes sense, because they're awesome. David Newfeld though, seems to disagree.

After the most recent mention of cloudberry records, a commenter questioned the level of coverage that it got from the site. After a little while, a commenter going by the name of David Newfeld joined the conversation:

Your hippy speak is all good and well, but Cloudberry Records?

Really? Looking back ten years from now, Cloudberry is going to be pretty unmemorable... actually. Has even one of these bands cracked the top 200 on CMJ? Even bands on Sarah got radio play! Come on guys! No one knows these bands outside of the the small club you've created... which is fine, but don't pretend it's anything more than that. Cloudberry will not be remembered as a Slumberland because Slumberland had bands that made that label famous (i.e. The Aisters Set, Stereolab, Small Factory...). If Slow Down Tallahassee become the White Stripes then I guess I'll eat my words, but as it stands Cloudberry Records will be long forgotten.

The thread goes on for a long while, with 'David Newfeld' arguing in favor of radio play and charts as a measure of success, mentioning Los Campesinos! a couple times, and just generally not getting how indiepop works.

The radio doesn't matter. The charts don't matter. Indiepop's not about that. While there's no problem with that, and a lot of indiepop bands do make their way in the mainstream, some of the most influential stayed below the radar of pretty much everyone. With a DIY, largely unpromoted scene like this, what gets remembered is what gets loved and cherished by the people within the scene. This can be something like Black Tambourine, a band that released a string of singles in the early 90s, played only a couple of gigs, and had a complete recordings album released after they broke up. That album has ten tracks on it, and they're widely counted as one of the most influential indiepop bands of that period.

People care about Cloudberry not because it's got any sort of best-selling big name acts on it, but because it's a labor of love. Because they're working very hard on music that would otherwise go unnoticed, music that somebody cared enough to make and put out there for the world to listen to. Cloudberry's making that possible, in their own small way, and working very hard at it.

Now, we don't know that this commenter is actually David

People care about Cloudberry not because it's got any sort of best-selling big name acts on it, but because it's a labor of love. Because they're working very hard on music that would otherwise go unnoticed, music that somebody cared enough to make and put out there for the world to listen to.

Newfeld, or if he is that he's *that* David Newfeld. But it seems to add up. He's well known, but he's not that well known, so there's not a strong impetus to impersonate him. He names Los Campesinos!, a band that David Newfeld worked with, a couple times. He insists that the only viable way to success is that that Broken Social Scene and Los Campesinos! are working on.

He finishes off his participation in the thread by saying that, in ten years time, no one will remember Cloudberry Records.

He's wrong. Cloudberry will be remembered by those who appreciate what they've done and are continuing to do. What's more, I'll remember that David Newfeld is hopelessly in the grips of the industry's framing of how music works and that he's an asshole who feels the need to put down people who are just doing what they care about. Even if he's right, that the indiepop won't remember Cloudberry in ten year's time, he's still an asshole for this reason. ●

Dear Thieves

by **Stephen Morton**

To the asswipe(s) who stole the following items from the Omen room since the start of the school year: two flat screen monitors, a nice keyboard and mouse set, a *bad* keyboard and mouse set, and now finally our computer, which was new at the start of this year:

May these catch fire while you are using them, and may the fumes give you cancer.

Relay for Life Stories

by Victoria Quine →

I am a student of Hampshire College.

Thus, I have a pet cause.

And like every student of Hampshire College, I think mine is the most worthy and important, and I will fiercely defend this. Furthermore, I am doing something about it.

Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, I hate cancer. I hate what it turns people into, I hate what it does to people who it affects, I hate who it affects, I hate it. I am a product of having spent most of my weekends as a 4-5 year old in a hospital, visiting my grandma as she forgot who I was, who her family was, who she was, because of the cancer which had rooted itself in her brain. I am a product of watching my mother try and hide her tears, while I danced around, dressed as Tinkerbell, determined to make Grandma better by sprinkling her with my golden glitter fairy dust. I am a product of having spent most of my as an 8 year old and all of them as an 11 year old in my grandmother and grandfather's house, watching my already petite grandmother shrink before my eyes, becoming a pale ghost of the fiercely intelligent and wonderful woman she once was as leukemia cursed through the very blood that was supposed to be keeping her alive. I am a product of leaning over my 11th birthday cake with only one wish "please keep Grandmother alive for at least today."

Today I am also a product of having a long talk with another elderly woman, but one who is strong and alive, and whose name is often said with a playful lilt. Roberta survived cancer, the same kind that her sister had died of several years earlier. Roberta survived and is cancer free today because of the work I am determined to keep supporting. Research advanced fast enough in a few years to save her where her sister had to have a breast removed before cancer took her life.

I relay. I participate in the Relay for Life, sponsored by

the American Cancer Society. Last year, I organized Hampshire College's first team (in several years, since apparently there had been one once or twice several years prior, but it never stayed through) with Circus Folk Unite! Circus Folk Unite Against Cancer! raised over \$3,000: more than 3 times our original goal. I am determined to get the rest of Hampshire College involved in the Relay. If Hampshire's really full of all these activists and do-gooders who care about the world we're living in, why is it that Hampshire has been involved in this only rarely? I feel as though it's extremely important that we get involved. Cancer does not care about politics, race, gender, sexuality, religion, or many of the otherwise laden and charged issues. Being human qualifies you as a potential victim. (Heck, being an animal qualifies you, in many cases.) Everyone knows someone who's been affected.

The Relay for Life is a block party that occurs every year at Amherst College's Pratt Field for 18 hours. A newcomer can expect to hear bands playing, acapella groups singing, impromptu soccer and Frisbee games, food, henna and/or facepainting, improv groups and (because after all, the Circus Folk have come to play) a fairy dangling from beautiful blue silks in a tree while friends juggle beneath her. All the while, students and anyone else from the Five Colleges walk, skip, run, cartwheel, juggle, stilt, hop, fly, or galumph around a track all night. The goal is to have at least one representative (though I think it's more fun with a friend to chat with) from each team walking etc. around the track all night. In short, it's amazingly fun.

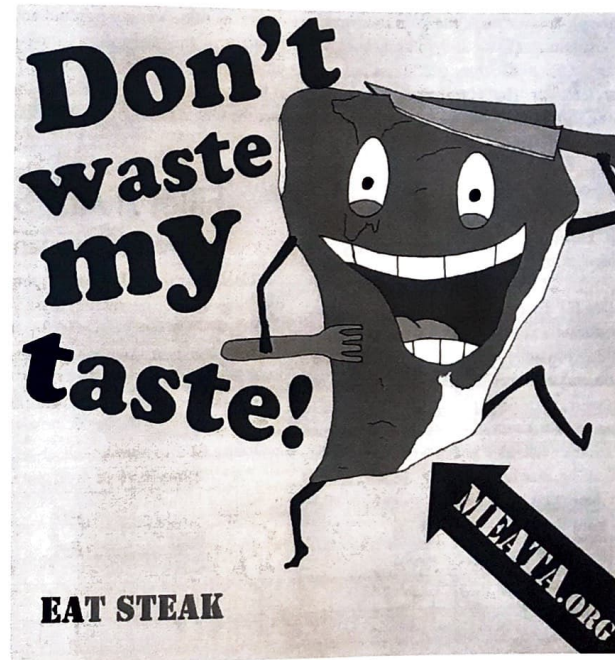
Around all the fun, Relay raises money for all kinds of cancer. The money raised in the region GOES to the region. (For example, money raised in New England goes to fund research, services, awareness and prevention in New England.)

“ Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, I hate cancer. I hate what it turns people into, I hate what it does to people who it affects, I hate who it affects, I hate it. ”

It's a community event that brings people together to remember those who have not survived the battle and to celebrate those who have, as well as the advances that science has made already. The event is sponsored by the American Cancer Society. Among its other services, ACS provides funding to researchers who could not get government grants and to date, 43 of these researchers have been awarded the Nobel Prize for their work. They make a difference, and I want to too.

I relay because it matters to me. My mom saw polio eradicated in her lifetime so that I never had to see it. I want to see cancer eradicated in mine so that my children never have to see it. 🍖

Steak →
by Kristian Brevik



by Tara Jacob

Known as SAGA ever since the food supply company by that name ran it, no one will ever call the Hampshire cafeteria SODEXHO for its current catering company. In school publications and online, the Dining Commons is the official wording (occasionally the acronym 'the D.C.' even crops up). Not that students actually use that wording. A suggestion from Assistant Dean of Students Josiah Litant: rename the place **Roberta's**. That would catch on fast - and serve as a lasting legacy to Hampshire's perennial card-swiping lady.

No, not the textbook store. Yes, you can buy books there, sometimes even books for classes. And yes, you can sell back your textbooks there at the end of the semester. But it's not the Textbook Store – that's the little room at the back of the Airport Lounge. Once ambiguously known as The Bookstore or The School Store, after a campus-wide online vote last semester **The Hampstore** became the official title of the shop where you go to buy magazines, overpriced snacks, and last-minute stationary supplies. While probably the best of the name options given on the ballot, I think we could do better.

They're **spaceships**. Get with the times.

Thought Hampshire didn't have tests? That's true - expect for the last meeting of your Division II or III committee, when your chair and member(s) talk with you and ask questions about your Portfolio – still sometimes referred to as a Div II/III Exam. Though modeled on the International Baccalaureate 'exams,' whether you pass your Div isn't entirely dependent on that final meeting. So why not call it a **Div II/III Close**, as it is the official recognition of the culmination of your work?

It's always been known as a lottery, when in fact the on-campus housing selection process that occurs at the end of each Spring semester is much less about chance than seniority and friendship circles. Whether or not the process needs revamping, the name certainly does. Another suggestion from Josiah Litant: call it the **Housing Auction**. After all, the way the process works is that each mod/hall is brought up to the block and groups bid their collective points until Linda Mollison bangs her gavel, indicating a winner. (Well, almost. That's the way it should work, anyway. Hear that, Linda? Get a gavel.)

Not being a journalistic publication or a prophetic periodical but instead a free-speech journal, the Omen, despite its title, does not portend anything. It reflects the opinions of the Hampshire Community members who submit to it. As those submissions are sometimes regarded as boring, confrontational, erotic, and offensive, I suggest that the Omen be renamed **'Your Mom.'** 🍑

by **Evan Silberman** →

I looked up the CDC's weight percentile charts by age, the things with the curves they mark your weight on at the doctor's office. When I was born, I weighed 10 pounds 9 ounces, putting me around the 95th percentile or so for boys. Now, nearly 19, I weigh 115 lbs. This is around the 2nd percentile.

I am a skinny son of a bitch.

Reposted from Facebook to fill space. 🐼

Hannah Allen's*

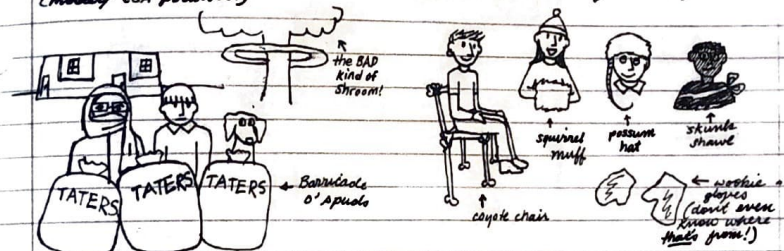
* (Grand Ogara and Chairperson - for life of the smoldering crates that used to be Massachusetts)



DAY 2

Our hippies at the realization that we don't have to compromise our term people is soon dampened by the reality that it is still winter in the (northern of the) Pioneer Valley, we have no heat, and places we can call for talent have been annihilated. Fortunately, Greenwood is still operating, since it was being held for three cold, wet, rape and gorilla glue (which, as we know, is the strongest glue on earth.) morale high, nation steady (mostly CSA potatoes.)

mammals running low. One party tried to ford the river and our men did. We are forced to hunt for our food, since we have been eating lathes for breakfast, lunch and dinner. We succeed in catching some small animals to make fajitas out of. With the bones of squirrels and chipmunks, Kristap is able to fashion some crude furniture and weapons for self defense, and Gideon (who happened to be wandering around in the woods) fashions us some very strange accessories from the furs.

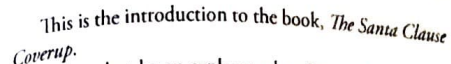


What a rude shock! I was poring over the subtlest of what remains of
recent history, when my professor of my Modern South Asia class snuck up on me. Apparently
since I had spent time in India, he thought the entire class down INDIVIDUALLY to let us know
that the next time we had no excuse for not handing in our papers on time. I told him
that because South Asia didn't exist anymore, there was really no reason for researching
Islamic fundamentalism and its role in the Pak-India conflict. He threatened me with
a no-pass, and I thought, on the off-chance that Hampshire College still existed, I should
probably not endanger my chances of student loans too much. I ¹⁰
boxed 6 bulletins, 3 boxes of clothing and 2 spare wicker ashtrays in exchange for a
good grade.



Uncharted Territory

by Jacob Lefton




Coverup. I wanted to be an explorer when I was a kid. I grew up in the time of Buzz Aldrin and Jacques Cousteau, Kipling, and Vernes. You know, all the old heros. Tom Swift took his electric rifle and beat the commies, Steve Rogers kicked Nazi butt, and Stallone turned Vietnam from a loss to a win. Saved our dignity there.

Sadly, as we learned in the Truman Show, everything that needs to be explored has been. People in the 1800's went to every state in the union, and soon after, every country in the world. In the mid-1900's, we even discovered how to go to the bottom of the sea and how to get to the moon. With the help of the Santa Clause Foundation—you know, the guys who busted the kraken and bigfoot—the man in the moon was proven to be myth.

My father worked for the Clause group during the 50's, and was part of that operation. I didn't know until years later, when I was going through his papers. He'd

died several years before, but no one had gotten around to cleaning out his office. When we finally took Mom to a home, we had to figure out what to do with the house. Little brother wanted to sell it, big sis wanted to keep it but she already had a place. I had my own broom closet in the upper east and didn't want to go back, but someone needed to clean the house out before we could do anything. With the other two bickering, I volunteered.

What started out as a two week vacation turned into a full scale investigation that even put my life in danger, several times. Imagine that—an aspiring private businessman uncovering secret government coverups. I swear to God I just fell into it too. There I was, going through the papers and I decided to try to close a few loose ends my father had left. Turns out they were the ends to a Gordian Knot of intrigue and I am no Alexander the Great, so I had to muddle through all by my own mortal self.

I'm no Kipling, I'm no Cousteau. I'm neither brilliant, nor brave, but I can confidently say I'm an explorer now. 

If we loved you more, we would put something entertaining here.

Instead, please enjoy this calming white space.

When Fonts are a Life or Death Matter

by Molly McLeod +

Do you choose your fonts carelessly? Without thought of the consequences that might come about when choosing a particular font? It's not like fonts are a life or death matter, right? Well, clearly you've never heard about the Great Montgomery Muffin Mishap of 2002. After hearing this true story, you may think twice about choosing your fonts.

In Mill City, California, Mayor Montgomery arrived early one Monday morning in April as his secretary was delivering his mail. On the top of the pile was a memo that he noticed immediately was written in Comic Sans. He assumed, of course, that it was from his six-year-old daughter, because who in their right mind over the age of seven would use Comic Sans? Well, Mayor Montgomery didn't have a lot going for him, but he did at least have good taste in fonts. As a matter of fact, the reason he probably won the election was his outstanding campaign signs, which utilized the font Gotham (designed in 2000 by Tobias Frere-Jones), incidentally the same font Barack Obama now uses. But that's besides the point. The point is, he set the note in Comic Sans aside.

As much as he loved his daughter, he was anticipating a busy day and planned to read the note at lunch.

This was a fatal decision for Morgan Berry. Morgan Berry was the best muffin baker on the planet, in fact, his muffins were so damn good that he put every single other muffin manufacturer in the state out of business. All the other muffin bakers were unemployed for a while and decided this was unfair, so they filed a lawsuit against him and won and Morgan Berry was sentenced to death. But his muffin patrons fought against this decision. They gathered eight million signatures, which was the requirement to get a petition on the desk of Mayor Montgomery, who was the only one with veto power.

Alas, the dimwit secretary delivered the document that could save Morgan's life to Mayor Montgomery in Comic Sans, which caused the last breath of poor Morgan Berry. So you see, choosing the right font can indeed be a life or death matter. In this story, it caused not one but two deaths (the dimwit secretary was also executed.)

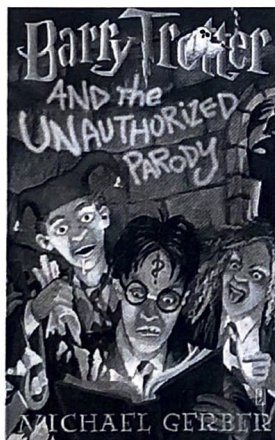
Interrobang?

A brief exposé

by Molly McLeod •

Wondering what the unusual punctuation mark on the egg on the cover of this *Omen* is? It's called an interrobang! What could be greater than both an exclamation point (commonly called a 'bang' in typesetting lingo) and a question mark (sometimes known as a interrogative point) both in one single character? Interrobangs are so cool! Did you know they were invented by Martin K. Speckter in 1962? He was so sick of people having to choose just using a single mark for things like rhetorical questions! And isn't it like, totally annoying when you use both marks at once like this?!!! So the next time you feel like you need to shout a question or make a snide ironic remark, you can use an interrobang — why wouldn't you?

In Michael Gerber's Harry Potter parody, Barry Trotter, Barry's scar is an interrobang.



Top Five Serif Fonts to Use: Garamond, Baskerville, Caslon, Jenson, Bodoni.

Top Five Sans Serif Fonts to Use: Futura, Gill Sans, Helvetica, Century Gothic, Myriad.

Top Five Fonts to Never Use Ever: Comic Sans, Papyrus, Curlz, Arial, Bradley Hand.

(Yes, there is a difference between Arial and Helvetica. Just come to the screening of *Helvetica* that will be sometime this semester.)

Obama has the Best Fonts: the Presidential Election & Graphic Design

by Molly McLeod

by Molly McLeod

Okay, so I haven't felt really strongly about any of the presidential candidates. But after a closer examination of issues important to me, I now completely support Obama. These issues important to me are, of course, design and typography.

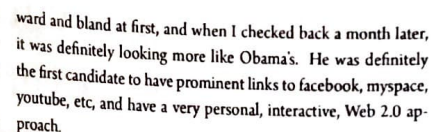
I spent the afternoon looking through all of the candidate's websites, and Obama has the best by far. I mean, just look at it, it's beautiful! The main body of the page is floating on a drop shadow over some floaty, elegant blue cloudiness. <http://www.barackobama.com/>

He's really the only candidate with a real logo, the rest just have their names in a bumper sticker format. Hillary's logo is kind of a chunky, boring serif font. Obama's is a clean, smooth, versatile but recognizable logo. And boy, have they made good use of it! Every single iconic element on the site has some variant of the logo worked in — really brilliant how they've done it. On the homepage, on the right side, it's utilized in the "Make a Difference" section. Hillary's site has a similar section, but her icons are all tacky, generic icons that look like they were found on a template. Also, he has a unique menu bar section called "People," with a section for every kind of minority group, plus students, environmentalists, americans abroad, veterans, people of faith, even an amusing page for kids. They each have a distinctive variation on the logo, which gives a really personal feel, and obviously a lot of thought was put into it. He also has links to sites for all 50 states, not just the ones that have early primaries.

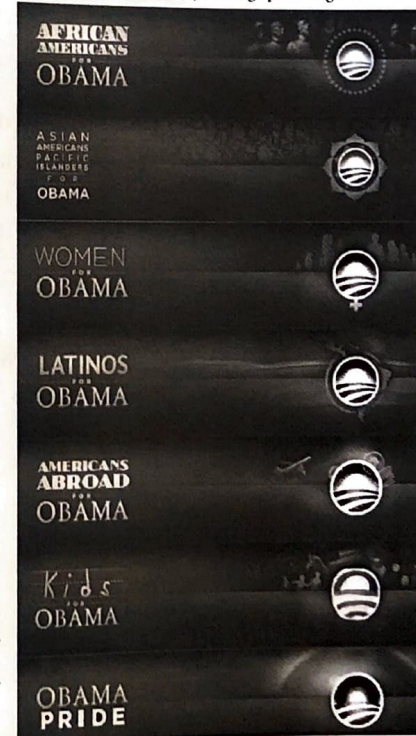
His whole website has a really well-designed, custom feel to it. Hillary's, and many of the others, feel just like presidential-candidate-web-templates. He's got unique logos (including different fonts) for Iowa, NH, Nevada, and SC.

Also, I first started looking at these sites last spring. Obama's was good from the beginning. Hillary's was pretty straightfor-

Look at all the variations on Obama's logo... and there are many more as well. He's clearly the only candidate who cares about font issues.



I realize the candidates themselves probably didn't DIRECTLY influence the designs. But hey, why not choose my president the same way I choose everything everything else in my life? What food brands I buy, what books and magazines and newspapers I read, what college to go to (just a slight exaggeration... Hampshire did have the best designed prospectus at the time) ...all based on which have the best font choices, color considerations, and design elements. What can I say? I'm a graphic designer.



“ The Omen presents The Omen Recursive The Omen Cover Contest

“An infinite Omen cover by 2053”

You know those pictures that are like a picture of a guy wearing a T-shirt or something, and his T-shirt has a picture of the same guy wearing a T-shirt, and that T-shirt in turn has *another* picture of the guy wearing a T-shirt...yeah, it's like that. Only with the Omen.

How to enter:

1. Take a photograph or digitally construct a scene *including the current issue of the Omen*. (For example, this issue of the Omen.)
2. Optional: Lay out an 8-1/2-by-11-inch Omen cover incorporating your photograph or digital creation.
3. Email your image to Evan Silberman at ejs07@hampshire.edu.

If your cover is sufficiently amusing to the Omen staff, you will see your work on the cover of the next issue of the Omen.

Bonus points will be awarded for incorporating endless tunnel effects via television.



Remeber: The Omen loves you!

